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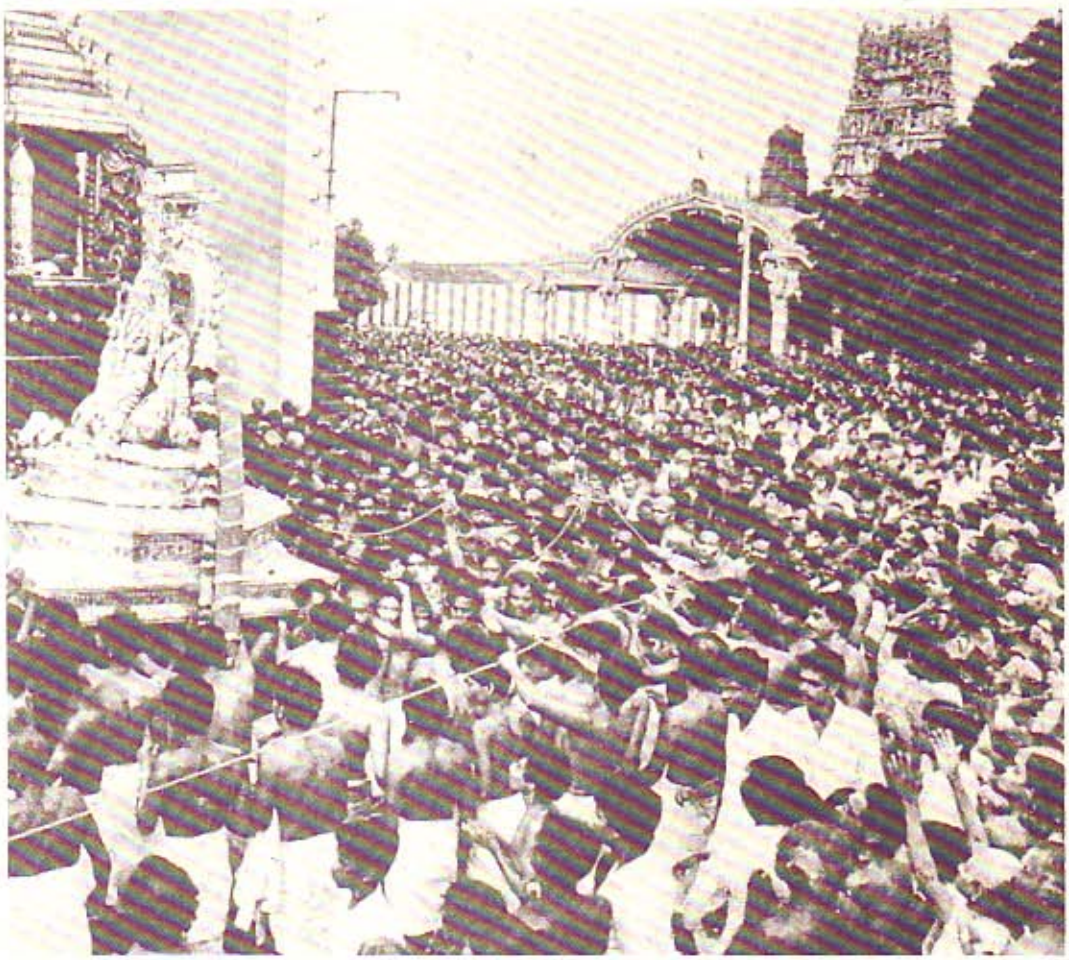

Piety, devotion and sea of heads — at the Nallur Murugan Temple, Jaffna in northern Sri Lanka during the annual chariot festival. Only a time of peace can witness such a scene. But when will peace arrive?

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CONTENTS

For Peace & Justice — Editorial 2
People and politics 3
Madras Newsletter 4
Colombo News Letter 5
Mother on Death Fast Dies 6
CWC Proposal on 'statelessness' 7
Air Lanka Blast — 5 charged 7
Letters 9

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CONTENTS

Committing the Army Abroad 10
Fast Unto Death by Mother 11
Commentary 12
Internationalisation of Tamil 13
British Nationality & Dual Citizenship 16
Film Review 19
Open Letter to Indian PM 20

FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

IRONY of all ironies! Hardly any Sinhalese prelate or politician asked for devolution or provincial councils. If at all, there was tremendous opposition to any such proposal. However, already elections have been held for four Provincial Councils and by June 9 elections would have been concluded for a further three. By then the island's seven provinces in which the Sinhalese people predominantly live would be enjoying substantial devolution of legislative and executive powers with their own Governor, Chief Minister and Board of Ministers.

It was the Tamil people predominantly living in the northern and eastern provinces who demanded, campaigned, struggled and fought for autonomy which is yet to be achieved. For all the tensions and hostilities engendered during recent years between the two communities resulting from the Tamil demand for autonomy, the first beneficiaries are the Sinhalese people, and they ought at least to thank the Tamil people for this unsolicited gift of extended devolved democracy.

How come that the Sinhalese people who never asked for devolution or provincial councils got them? The answer is not far to seek. The Tamil demand for autonomy could no longer be resisted. It was being urged as a basis for solving the ethnic conflict by India and the rest of the world too which have witnessed the fall-out of the conflict being deeply felt in their own countries. Failing in its repeated military endeavours, urged by India, reluctantly and step by step, the government of Sri Lanka came round to the idea of some form of autonomy to the Tamils. But it did not have the courage or the political honesty to tell the Sinhalese people that the resolution of the conflict demanded the grant of autonomy to the Tamils. Thus we have a situation in which the constitutional and institutional guarantees that the Tamil people required to protect their rights and identity as a people being granted to the Sinhalese too whose rights and identity were never under threat and in fact by the sheer strength of their permanently entrenched numerical majority, they required no such special guarantees. In any civilised society, it is the numerical minority, particularly, when its aspirations are linked to the preservation of its physical and cultural identities, that requires special protection.

The Tamil militant groups and the TULF are still of the view that the arrangements made through the 13th Amendment to the Constitution and the Provincial Council do not provide the safeguards they were expecting. In fact, at the time the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement was signed, the Agreement itself provided for 'residual matters', that is, those matters over which the Tamil representatives had expressed reservations, and those matters about which no provision has been made at all, be further discussed. These discussions never took place and they have not taken place yet.

It may be that the breakdown of the time-frame provided for the surrender of arms and the etablishment of the interim administration for the north and east, the resurgence of armed violence in these provinces and the eventual outbreak of fighting between the India Peace Keeping Force and the LTTE produced a climate in which the contemplated negotiations on the 'residual matters' could not take place. It may also be that, in view of the tensions that were building up in the south following the signing of the Agreement, the government felt prudent to enact the 13th Amendment to the Constitution and the Provincial Council in the way it did without giving a chance for the opposition to mobilise against such measures.

It is high time that the 'residual matters' be taken up for discussion without any further delay. The dominant Tamil militant group, the LTTE, which accepted the Accord with reservations, has indicated in several letters to the Indian Prime Minister that it is pledged to cooperate with the implementation of the Accord provided it is given the opportunity to negotiate about certain matters in respect which it has expressed concern. The other Tamil Militant groups and the TULF are also not satisfied with the present arrangements that some Sri Lankan Ministers had discussions with some representatives of the LTTE. It is also reported that Indian government officials have been negotiating with the LTTE stalwarts in Tamil Nadu. One leader of a militant group has in fact met and discussed with the President. Under the amnesty provisions of the Accord, some political prisoners are also being released.

In this context, the climate seems to be particularly suitable now for a resumption of negotiations on the 'residual matters' and the issues of concern for the Tamil people with the governments of India and Sri Lanka. And a prerequisite for such negotiations to take place in an amicable atmosphere is a cease-fire between the IPKF and the LTTE for a stated period during which the negotiations should be concluded. The Sri Lanka government, the IPKF and the Tamil Militant groups are said to be 'fighting' for peace and justice. What is required is an end to the fighting and resumption of 'talking' for peace and justice.

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PEOPLE & POLITICS by

Shanthi

LALITH FOOLED BY HOAX-JVP AGREEMENT

What John Rettie, the BBC and The Guardian correspondent in Colombo, described as 'the most significant development since the peace agreement with India was signed last July' and which stunned the people of Sri Lanka would appear to be nothing more than a hoax. He was referring to the so-called agreement between the government and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP-Peoples Liberation Front).

The Minister of National Security, Mr. Lalith Athulathmudali, who signed the 'agreement with the JVP' for the government made the announcement at a press conference on May 10 that the five year ban on the JVP would be lifted and in return the JVP would renounce the use of violence and surrender whatever weapons it has before May 29 at designated Buddhist temples. Accompanying at the conference were K.C. Senanayake, a 23 year old, who claimed to be a member of the JVP and the well-known human rights activist and Roman Catholic priest Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, who would appear to have acted as the mediator in securing this 'agreement'.

Under this 'agreement', all detained JVP members except those facing murder charges were to be released unconditionally. The JVP had been carrying on a ruthless campaign of murder since July last year in the course of which an estimated 300 persons have been killed. Those killed included the ruling United National Party Chairman, Harsha Abeywardene, the Anti-Subversion Unit police chief, Terrence Perera, the Sri Lanka Mahajana Party leader, Vijaya Kumaranatunga. Many belonging to the opposition parties which supported the Indo-Sri Lanka accord and the establishment of Provincial Councils to solve the ethnic conflict became victims of this murder campaign by the JVP.

At the press conference, Mr. Athulathmudali announced that Mr. Senanayake had provided him with a letter signed by the leader of the JVP Rohana Wijeweera and its General Secretary Upatissa Gamanayake authorising him (Mr. Senanayake) to sign the agreement.

No sooner this rather unexpected 'agreement' which had been hatched in utter secrecy was announced, doubts began to be raised about the authenticity of the letter produced by Senanayake. But the Minister had said that it would be verified by the government's Examiner of Questioned Documents. It is surprising that Athulathmudali, a man supposed to be in charge of the country's national security, did not take the elementary precaution to check the letter's authenticity before he made the announcement.

The initial doubts have now been confirmed that the letter was a fake. In a statement issued from his underground hideout, the leader of the JVP Rohana Wijeweera has denied that there was any agreement: 'We wish to reiterate that we have not at any stage negotiated secretly or in public with any member of the government. We do not know who Krishna Chandrasiri Senanayake is, nor did we give him any authority to negotiate on our behalf'.

To add to the government's embarrassment, and that of Athulathmudali in particular, Mr. Senanayake at a press conference held subsequently confirmed that he had not met Mr. Wijeweera or Mr. Gamanayake, the two purported signatories to the letter authorising the signing of the 'agreement'. He said that his contact with the JVP leadership was through a man who described himself as 'Rohana', an active member of the JVP with a direct line of communication with its leaders. What is worse is his suggestion that the government might have used him for its own purposes.

Many questions arise from Athulathmudali's announcement of this 'non-agreement'. When he said that he had initiated the 'secret negotiations' with the JVP three weeks earlier, did he do it on his own initiative or did he keep the President and the government informed? Why didn't he check the authenticity of the letter before going public? Were the credentials of Senanayake who was supposed to sign on behalf of the JVP checked, and if not whay not? Why did he act so hastily and irresponsibly so as to bring the government into such public ridicule?

No doubt that Mr. Athulathmudali's political stock has taken a tumble in the recent past and the prospect of achieving his cherished ambition of inheriting the mantle of the Presidency had receded to a substantial extent. There have also been speculation for some months now that he is going to be removed from his present important cabinet portfolio and reverted back to his previous ministry of trade. The rising star at the present moment is the Minister of Lands, Mr. Gamini Dissanayake who appears to have won the incumbent's favour. One wonders whether Mr. Athulathmudali's present rather irresponsible and wreckless adventure was motivated by the sheer subjective drive to recover lost political ground.

CRISIS WITHIN THE JVP

As far as the JVP is concerned, the evidence that emerges discloses that the organistion is riddled with factional infighting. The divisions have become so serious that one faction is said to be gunning down members associated with the other. Its leader Rohana Wijeweera has been accused of authoritarian and dictatorial actions and that he does not tolerate even friendly criticism. Much more fundamental are the differences arising from its current military campaign of individual terrorism and the crisis has reached leadership level.

The General Secretary of the JVP, Upatissa Gamanayake, in a signed leaflet to party members has called for a change in leadership. The leaflet entitled 'Let us form a new leadership to fight against J.R's fascist rule' dated 19 March and issued at about the same time as the JVP's official leaflet entitled 'Why we dispatched Vijaya', Gamanayake questions the wisdom of the assassination of Vijaya Kumaranatunga, puts the blame on Wijeweera for his murder.

Gamanayake's leaflet in a direct reference to Wijeweera says, 'If cowardice gets the upper hand within our party, it is our duty to defeat such trends. Even if such a person has done much for the JVP in the past period, it is doubt[illegible] whether he is serving our [illegible] our fatherland if he is unclear about his duty at the present moment.

'After the 1971 repression, Wijeweera remained in the party not because he possessed an;y courage or self-confidence but because of the appeal and pressure from the rank and file. We have now to consider the validity of his leadership in the face of the great tasks ahead.

'We have to consider the 'advantages' we get through individual terrorism. We have to assess our activities over the past 8 months, and especially after the assassination of Vijaya Kumaranatunga in order to prepare a correct programme for the future'.

Gamanayake's leaflet reveals that Vijaya Kumaranatunga's murder was discussed in the JVP Central Committee and that, while most of the members opposed such action, only Wijeweera and 'two others' were in favour. Nevertheless, the murder was carried out:

'The Central Committee except for three members, stressed that we should not get upset about the popularity of Vijaya Kumaranatunga and that assassinating him at this moment would do great damage to our party. But Wijeweera failed to realise this. But it is not Wijeweera who is experiencing the grave consequences, but the other members of the party.

'Again the party is in a difficult position because of his arbitrary acts. Here Wijeweera must take the responsibility for bestowing undue popularity on the United Socialist Alliance.

'Self-critically we must accept this

Continued on page 11

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Madras Newsletter: by ARJUNA

LTTE-MUSLIM ACCORD

A significant development took place in Madras in the third week of April which passed off without much fanfare or publicity, but which could well prove to be a historic turning point in the Tamil struggle in Sri Lanka. Understanding was reached between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and the visiting Muslim delegation on a wide spectrum of issues concerning the two people. The Muslim delegation of the recently formed Muslim United Liberation Front (MULF) was headed by former SLFP Minister Dr. Al Haj Baddudin Mahmud and included the Secretary General of the Front Mr.M.I.M.Mohideen and former M.P. for Kalmunai Mr.M.C.Ahmed.

A joint statement of both parties, signed on behalf of the LTTE by the Madras-based former Jaffna Commander Mr.Krishnakumar (Kittu) and by Mr.Mohideen of the MULF has far-reaching implications, apart from opening the way for a close identity in Tamil-Muslim relation in the Eastern Province. The meetings were spread over three days — the 15th, 16th and 19th April.

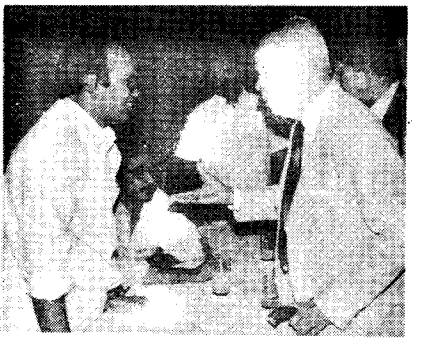
The high degree of boldness evidenced by both sides and the spirit of give-and-take that was displayed stand out, in the terms of the joint statement. Following are some of the highlights:

- It is understood that althought the Muslim people living in Sri Lanka speak the Tamil language, they are a distinct ethnic group falling within the totality of Tamil nationality.
- The Muslim people recognise that the area composed of the northern and eastern Provinces are as much their traditional homeland as it is of the rest of Tamil-speaking people.
- The Muslim people believe that their interests could be safeguarded only in their homeland, and this could be achieved only thourgh a greater unity between all Tamil-speaking people.
- Since the Muslim people constitute a minority in their homeland, and hence it is important that they should be assured of a life free from fear and insecurity, the LTTE will take all steps to ensure this and extend all co-operation in the future to have the security of the Muslim people guaranteed by law.
- Whatever steps taken to safeguard the interests of the Muslim people and the arriving at a reasonable power-sharing agreement will be done in such a way as not to undermine the territorial integrity of the Tamil homeland.
- While the Muslim people form 33% of the population in the Eastern Province and will comprise 18% in the combined Northern and Eastern Provinces, it is agreed that in order to ensure maximum safeguard for them and enable them to enjoy an equitable power-sharing, they will be entitled to not less than 30% of the representation in the Provincial Council and the Cabinet.
- It is agreed that in all future land distribution, the Muslim people will be entitled to not less than 35% in the Eastern Province, not less than 30% in the Mannar district and not less than 5% in other areas.
- Unless otherwise a Muslim has been appointed Chief Minister of the Northern-Eastern Provincial Council, legal provision should be made to ensure that a Muslim is appointed as the Deputy Chief Minister of said Council.
- A de-colonization policy should be evolved in order to redress the adverse effect caused by planned Government colonization.
- The forthcoming election for the Provincial Council of the Tamil-speaking Province should be based on a voters' list compiled in a manner that is fair and justifiable .
- It was agreed that in order to alleviate the sufferings of the vast mass of innocent civilians who are the ones who are truly affected by the military actions, and to enable them to return to normal, peaceful life, there should be an immediate ceasefire.
- Once hostilities cease,it is imperative that there should be an interim administration until such time as people return to normal life and Provincial Council elections are held. The composition of the interim administration should be in accordance with the earlier decision arrived at in this connection.

Some of the major implications that follow from this agreement are: The Muslims in the Eastern and Northern Provinces have decided that their future well-being lies in identifying themselves with the other Tamil-speaking people in these two provinces, and not look for succour outside; that they are no longer prepared to be led by Muslim leaders in the south-west; that they recognise in the LTTE its Tamil representative character; above all, they have decided to support the concept of the Tamil traditional homeland.

On their return to Colombo, the M.U.L.F. has appealed to Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to announce a ceasefire, and urged President Jayewardene to issue a proclamation merging the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

While the M.U.L.F. delegation visit to Madras was by all accounts a big success and its dialogue with the LTTE cordial and fruitful, there were a couple of unpleasant incidents prior to their departure, according to informed sources. They arose out of statements made by the visiting Muslim leaders to Indian journalists that the LTTE had no hand in the recent killings of some Muslims in Kalmunai and that another militant group was the one responsible. This apparently irked some members of two other militant groups in Madras, who on pretext of seeking an interview with the Muslim leaders at the hotel



LTTE's 'Kittu' & Dr Baddudin Mahmud

President where they staying tried to browbeat them.'The LTTE was responsible for the killing of 17 Muslims in Kalmunai. How can you cover it up ?', asked one of them heatedly.'You came to Madras to speak only to the LTTE ? You think that only the LTTE has weapons ? We too have arms, you know', said another, adopting an offensive tone.

According to a report in the Tamil weekly, the JUNIOR VIKATAN, the Muslim leaders while being polite, dealt with the discourteous youths very firmly. 'Look here "Thambimare"— we do not issue statements about happenings in the Eastern Provinces while seated in Madras.We are all people who came from there. We have evidence to prove that it was your organisation that was responsible for the killings of Muslims in Kalmunai. If you so desire, we are ready to produce the evidence in public'. The second man who spoke about arms was told: 'Please don't run away with the idea that we are afraid of weapons. We came to talk to the LTTE not because they have arms, but because we consider them the legitimate representatives of the Tamils. If you try to threaten us with arms, we can assure you that we Muslims can get any amount of arms from abroad; and we are not going to take shelter behind third parties and display our might. . .' (in an obvious reference to the group's consorting with the IPKF in the East). The interview ended on that note, with the youths walking out in that same threatening mood!

DESPERATE MOVES BY CONGRESS(I)

The mountain laboured and brought forth a mouse, so goes an old saying-.The Congress(I) seems to have achieved the same result in Tamil Nadu, when it held its much-publicised, much awaited AICC(I) sessions at Maraimalanagar (renamed Kamaraj Nagar for the purpose) during the penultimate week-end in April. The *Indian Express* called it a damp squib. Considering the amount of money thrown into the exercise, the elaborate security arrangements, and the expectations that were held out, the Congress(I) does not seem to be anywhere nearer an election victory than it was before. Said the *Indian Express:* 'The intention behind holding the recent

Contd. on page 17

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COLOMBO NEWS LETTER

by Chithra

P.C. ELECTION — SLFP'S BLUNDER

The sixty per cent voter turnout at the recent elections for four Provincial Councils (Uva, North Central, Uva and Sabragamuwa) was certainly low compared to the national average poll recorded at general elections held in the past. But, compared to the average poll of 35 to 40 per cent recorded in local government elections, the voter turnout can be regarded as extremely good.

TWO FACTORS

There were two other important factors that would have certainly had a bearing on the poll. The main opposition party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), did not field candidates and called for a boycott of the P.C. elections. Then there was the actual and threatened violence by the banned Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) directed at candidates and voters. But what is clear is that neither of these factors succeeded in persuading or preventing the majority of eligible voters from exercising their franchise.

In spite of the perceptible unpopularity of the government resulting from the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord and the presence of Indian troops on the Island's soil, the ruling United National Party (UNP) was well prepared and organised for the elections. It had ensured some of its leading members, including Cabinet ministers and MPs to resign and lead the contest in the provinces. The UNP won a majority of seats in all four PCs with 88 out of the 155 seats having received 56.1 per cent of the votes cast.

The outcome of these elections would appear to have injected fresh hopes among UNP leaders fuelling speculation that the President Jayawardene might call for parliamentary elections sooner than it is due with a view to taking advantage of the present momentum and disarray in which the SLFP finds itself. If the elections for three more PCs to be held on June 2 and 9 also record a similar or increased poll with the UNP faring reasonably well, the odds are that President Jayawardene will plum for a snap general election before the year is out.

USA's PERFORMANCE

In the absence of the SLFP, the United Socialist Alliance provided the main opposition to the UNF in the PC elections. Formed only recently, it had only a few weeks to select its candidates and carry out its campaign. Its most popular and charismatic leader-to-be, Vijaya Kumaranatunga was assassinated by the JVP even before the USA was officially inaugurated. His untimely departure was unquestionably a serious setback for the USA. As the Sunday Times (Sri Lanka, 1.5.88) editorially put it,"...the United Socialist Alliance should be commended on its decision to contest the elections, taking up the challenge thrown by the government. Accepting reality as a party in opposition, it did not try to call the shots or dictate the terms of the battle, but seized the opportunity offered the confrontation . In the campaign itself, it was beset with many an obstacle. As it went into the hustings, its most charismatic leader was no more. Several of its candidates in the field were killed or injured by opponents of the poll. Its leaders had to carry on with the protection of firearms and private bodyguards. It lacked the built-in advantage of a party in power. . ." In the event, the USA received per cent of the votes cast and won 64 seats to the UNP's 88. It failed to gain control of the Sabaragamuwa PC by a narrow 2 seat margin, and if not for Thondaman's CWC support for the UNP, the USA would have most probablywrested control of this PC. Although the USA would have liked to gain control of one or more of the PCs, its leaders were justifiably satisfied with their performance. An exhuberant Dr. Colvin R de Silva said, "So many people in the country thought that the left had been wiped out. And here we are, right in the middle of the map, hoping to go forward from here ".

SLFP's TANGLED WEB

The SLFP was ensnared in a tangled web of its own creation. It opposed the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord and establishment of Provincial Council and vowed to abolish them if and when they came to power. It did not field candidates and called upon the people to boycott the PC elections on the basis that what the country needed at this juncture was a general election. The boycott campaign hardly got off the ground as the government banned all public meeting associated with the call for a boycott. But the biggest blunder made by the SLFP leadership was that they misjudged the mood of the people.

The people of Sri Lanka have been used to participating in periodic elections, and campaigning and voting at elections had become a part and parcel of the political process to which they had become accustomed until President Jayawardene committed the aberration of postponing the general elections by the subterfuge of a referendum in December 1982. Having been deprived of their right to participate in the electoral process for a continuous period of almost eleven years, this was the first time that a substantial section of the people were being offered the chance to exercise their accustomed right to vote, and the people were not inclined to decline that chance.

By boycotting an election in four provinces in which an estimated 2.8 million people were to cast their votes, the SLFP only succeeded in marginalising itself from the people, and provided an opportunity to the USA to project itself as the only opposition force to the ruling UNP.

The SLFP's monumental error was its failure to recognise and accept realities — the Provincial council law had already been enacted and the PCs have come into being as part of the constitutional power structure of the country. Today, four provinces of the island are already under the control of the UNP with its own Chief Minister and Board of Ministers. The SLFP is also boycotting the elections to the be held on June 2 and 9 for the three PCs of the Western, Central and Southern Provinces where an estimated 4.9 million people are eligible to vote. When these elections are over, the two political formations that would figure before the people either in power or opposition are the UNP and the USA. And the SLFP would find itself excluded altogether from the Provincial Council arena in all the seven provinces for the next five years.

SEVERE CRITICISM

The tactic of boycotting the elections has come under severe criticism both by the rank and file of the SLFP and the pro-SLFP media. It seems to have led the party into a blind alley and left its rank and file in a state of total demoralisation. Political observers doubt the wisdom of its only preoccupation — its demand for a general election while other parties are actually participating in the PC election in which millions of voters are taking part. They also believe that had the SLFP contested, together with the USA, the UNP could have been prevented from gaining control of most of the PCs and that it would have been in a stronger position to campaign for a general election. A spokesman for the USA is quoted as saying : "Mrs. Bandaranaike can be written off now. If she had contested, she would have wiped the slate clean. She would have had a huge base to put pressure on the government to have an immediate general election. Now they have given us a small base to work from and actually strengthened the government's hand".

The new-comer to the political scene, the newly formed Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, won three seats in each of the districts it contested. Southern Muslims have, in the past, normally aligned themselves with either the UNP or the SLFP and the entry of the SLMC attracted severe criticism from those Muslim stalwarts from these parties. However, the emergence of a separate Muslim oriented political party is not without significance, and is a manifestation of the desire of the Muslims to assert their separate identity.

Thondaman's Ceylon Workers Congress candidates contested under the

Continued on page 7

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AT THE HANDS OF THE IPKF

ANOTHER INSTANCE OF BRUTALITY

Sivasamboo Murugesu, a Sri Lankan Tamil presently living in Ontario in Canada, in a letter addressed to Rajiv Gandhi the Indian Prime Minister, has described the manner in which IPKF personnel murdered members of his family and also called for a team of international jurists to be allowed to investigate into the crimes committed by the IPKF.

Pointing out that the Indian Prime Minister's mother too was brutally murdered, Mr.Murugesu's letter states

"In a similar manner your bandit soldiers entered my house, where my widowed junior sister, my senior sister, her husband and their six children, my children and my sister's grand son were staying; and opened fire at them without any provocation. They killed my sister (46 years), her son-inlaw (26 years), my brother-inlaw (58 years) and two other relatives over 50 years old. Many children were badly injured including a 3 years old infant. My brother-inlaw died on the third day due to bleeding and sister's son-inlaw died after six hours of bleeding. All the injured children and my senior sister who were badly injured were taken to the hospital on the third day. Your soldiers wanted them to die out of bleeding whereas your mother was given treatment immediately. Is your mother's life different from the others, because she was a Prime minister? On the judgement day they will be treated as equal before god. It is a privilege and not a right to be a Prime Minister.

"After all these cruelty the dead bodies were put together in front of the entrance to our Hindu Temple and partially burnt there by your soldiers. They have insulted our place of worship and a Holy shrine.

"After this carnage they ordered injured ones to move out of the house and the soldiers (about 25 of them) looted the house. They took more than 600 grams of golden jewellry belonging to four families and other valuable electrical items. They didn't even leave old pots and pans. They made a clean sweep of the house.

"I am sure that you can't see the events that are happening in Jaffna. If you are really honest in bringing these culprits to justice you should allow a team of international jurists to investigate into these crimes. I am prepared to give evidence in front of such a team."

DEATH FAST MOTHER DIES

Forty-eight year old Mrs. Poopathy Kanapathippillai who had undertaken a fast unto death organised by the Batticaloa Mothers' Front died on 19 April after 31 days from the day she commenced her fast at the Mamangeswarar Hindu Temple.

Mrs. Kanapathippillai had undertaken the fast in support of the two demands put forward by the Mothers' Front, namely that there should be an immediate cease-fire between the Indian Peace Keeping Force and the LTTE and the Indian government should resume negotiations with the LTTE.

Mrs.Kanapathippillai commenced her fast on 19 March following the abrupt end to the fast by Mrs.Annammah David. She continued her fast in defiance of the frequent calls to give it up by the IPKF commanders.

Mrs.Kanapathippillai is the mother of five children. One son was killed in operations by the Sri Lanka security forces. Two of her sons and a grandson are presently in detention at the Boosa detention centre. Her husband is a retired railway officer.

Several hundred of Batticaloa residents paid homage to her at the office of the Mothers' Front where her body was kept. Mrs.Kanapathippillai was laid to rest on 21 April with thousands of mourners participating in the funeral procession.

The Mothers' Front announced that, despite Mrs. Kanapathippillai's death, the fasting unto death campaign would continue until the Front's demands are met with favour.

SUSPECT IN GRENADE ATTACK IN PARLIAMENT ARRESTED

One of Sri Lanka's most wanted men, Ajit Kumara, who is suspected of having been responsible for the grenade attack in Parliament on August 18 last year in an attempt to assassinate President Jayawardene was arrested on 8 April. In this attack, which took place while the President was chairing a meeting of the UNP parliamentary group meeting, the president escaped injury but an MP was killed and many were injured including the Minister of National Security Lalith Athulathmudali.

Ajit Kumara, who was arrested by the Naula Police in the Matala district quite by accident and without knowing the identity of the man whom they were taking into custody, was on the run since August 18 with a million rupees on his head. He had seen the police approching him and taken to his heels. The police had been on a kassippu (illicit brew) raid, and they mistook Ajit to be in the illicit liquor trade and gave chase and caught him.

At the police station he disclosed his true identity to the pleasant surprise of the policemen. He had been living with his wife and one-year old child hiding from the rest of the world. But when the police went back to the house, the wife and child had vanished.

Through interrogating Ajit, the police hope to identify the others involved in the conspiracy.

BUS PASSENGERS SHOT & BURNT

On 11.03.88, at about 12.00 noon, K.K.R. private coach loaded with 30-35 passengers started its journey from Vavuniya to Trincomalee.

It reached Horowapothana at about 2.00 p.m. Ten to fifteen minutes after passing Horowapothana town, the coach was attacked when it slowed down at a bend, with machine gun fire and hand grenades. The driver of the bus was the first victim of the shooting. The bus stumbled and stopped. Some people in Army Uniform and talking in fluent Sinhala got into the bus and started cutting the passengers with swords. This is the version of the people who escaped with injuries.

According to mass media (Sri Lanka Broad-casting Corporation, Sri Lanka Rupavahini Corporation and Colombo based press) fifteen people were killed and 18 injured.

This murderous gang after cutting the passengers set fire to the bus while the injured were struggling for their lives inside the coach. Few people managed to escape. Many of the dead were beyond identification.

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DETAINEES RELEASED

Fifty political prisoners belonging to the Peoples Liberation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) were released on 27 April in Colombo by prison authorities. The released persons were held in the Boosa detention centre from where they were brought to Colombo for their release to officials of the newly formed Democratic Peoples Liberation Front, the political wing of PLOTE.

A few weeks earlier, the PLOTE leader Uma Maheswaran had met President Jayawardene and submitted a list of members belonging to his organisation in custody.

Another batch of fifty political prisoners belonging to the Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Front (EPRLF) detained at the Boosa Camp were released to the organisation's Central Committee member, Mr.Varatharajaperumal, on May 4.

CWC PROPOSALS TO END 'STATELESSNESS'

The latest proposal by the Ceylon Workers Congress to bring and end to the forty-year old problem of 'statelessness' suffered by plantation Tamils is to grant Indian citizenship to those who had gained Sri Lanka citizenship, but fled to India following the communal violence of July 1983 and who continue to remain there, and to grant Sri Lankan citizenship to an equal number presently resident in the island but who do not wish to be repatriated to India.

The general Secretary of the CWC said that it took over 20 years for 233,000 persons to be granted Sri Lanka citizenship. There are further 236,000 who have to be granted citizenship. At that rate it would take a further 25 years to solve the problem. That is why the CWC is asking the two governments to fix the numbers and settle the problem.

AIR LANKA BLAST, FIVE CHARGED

Five persons are charged on 38 counts in connection with the Air Sri Lanka Tri Star bomb blast at the Katunayake Airport on May 3, 1986 and were issued with summons returnable on June 13 by the High Court Judge in Colombo.

The five persons are: A.A.Gunasingham, Sinnadurai Kulasabanadan, Harischandran and Balasingham Balachandran, and they are to be tried under the Emergency Regulations and the Prevention of Terrorism Act with conspiracy to cause damage to the Airport, the Air Lanka plane and its goods, possession of offensive weapons and explosives, committing the murders of 16 persons, causing injury to 16 persons by the use explosives between 1.3.86 and 3.5.86.

'Subject IPKF to monitoring body'

The Centre for Society and Religion has suggested that the Indian peace keeping forces in Sri Lanka be subject to an impartial monitoring authority, and that the government of India hasten the disharge of its responsability under the Indo Lanka accord.

In an 'open letter to human rights groups and people's movement in India', the centre suggests that this monitoring authority could be an Indo Sri Lankan body or an international one like the International Committee of the Red Cross.

"The fact of the IPKF being not accountable to any such impartial agency is not good for Indo-Sri Lanka accord. But we think that Sri Lanka should not be subordinate to India. We Would welcome reciprocal relationships as between two independent neighbouring countries".

It warns that "the longer the IPKF remains here, and that in a somewhat partisan manner, the greater are the risks of India assuming a dominating and even imperialistic role — which we trust would be repugnant to most Indians".

The letter is signed by Fr. Tissa Balasuriya, Director, and Bernadeen Silva, Asst. Director/secretary.

TAMIL CONFERENCE

An 'International Tamil Conference' was held in London on April 30 and May 1 to discuss the 'Tamil National Struggle and Indo-Sri Lanka Peace Accord'. The Conference was organised by the 'World Federation of Tamils' and sponsored by the Tamil Voice International which came into circulation recently.

It is understood that the conference was attended by over 200 individuals and delegates from organisations specially invited for the occasion. As TAMIL TIMES was not invited, it is not possible to report in detail what transpired at the conference.

Public notifications regarding the conference indicated that several guest speakers addressed the conference. They included V.Gopalasamy, MP belonging to the DMK, Aladi Aruna, MP belonging to the AIADMK, Retired Supreme Court Judge Krishna Iyer, Former Foreign Secretary A.P.Venkateswaran, P.Nedumaran (all from India), Ms.Karen Parker, a human rights lawyer from USA and Prof.A.J.Wilson.

Mr.N.Seevaratnam, the Chairman of the conference Committee, and N.Satyendra, a leading lawyer from Sri Lanka and presently living in the UK, and who participated in the Thimpu Negotiations in 1985 as spokesman for the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), played a prominent role in the conference and its organisation.

The three resolutions adopted at the Conference by acclamation, in brief, (1) called upon the member states of United Nations, including the government of Sri Lanka 'to support the struggle of the Tamils of Ceylon for their basic and fundamental rights, including the right to self determination' and the international community to 'assist in securing a just political settlement of the conflict in Sri Lanka on the basis of an open recognition of the political reality that there exists in Sri Lanka today two nations — the Tamil Nation and the Sinhala Nation'; (2) recognised that V.Prabakaran and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have emerged as the true leaders of the Tamil National Struggle and called upon all member states of the UN to recognise them as such, and also called upon all Tamils to strengthen the LTTE to further the Tamil national struggle; and (3) called for an immediate ceasefire, and to commence negotiations to reach a political settlement within the framework of the four demands made by the Tamil delegations at the Thimpu Negotiations.

CONFESSION BY BOMB SUSPECT

The suspect in the case of the grenade attack in Parliament on 18 August last year has made a confession to the effect that he was responsible for the throwing the grenades in the direction of the President Jayawardene who was presiding at a meeting of the ruling UNP parliamentary group meeting on that day, the Inspector General of Police, Mr.Cyril Herat, told a press conference held recently in Colombo.

The one million reward offerred for the arrest of the suspect in connection with this incident would be divided among the police officers who effected his arrest. In addition they would also be promoted, according to an announcement made by the Minister of National Security, Mr.Lalith Athulathmudali.

Continued from page 5

UNP ticket and few of them won. But the CWC support for the UNP was crucial in the Sabaragumuna and Uva Provinces. The importance of the CWC support was most evident in the Badulla district, where a considerable number of plantation Tamil workers live, which recorded a poll of 73.5 per cent, the highest among all districts. There is no doubt that in the forthcoming elections in the Central Province, which includes the Nuwara Eliya district which has a majority of estate workers, the UNP would benefit from its alliance with the CWC.

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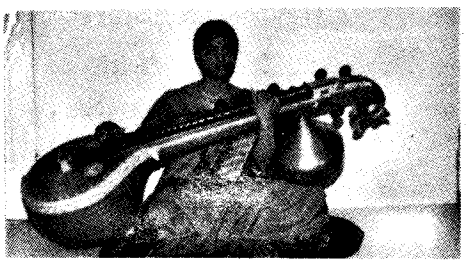

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LETTERS

The IPKF and the 'Three Star' Menace

Is organised Robbery, Extortion, Ransom kidnapping and Murder part of the Indian Peace Keeping Force exercise? This question has to be asked and it is time someone on behalf of the Indian Government gives an answer.

Since December 1987, thousands of bus travellers between Jaffna and Colombo have seen for themselves IPKF men almost all along the Jaffna-Vavuniya trunk road. Yet, lorries have been relieved of their entire goods on sections of this road under the control of the IPKF. Vehicles are stopped, passengers are relieved of cash and jewellery, businessmen are kidnapped and youths believed or suspected to be sympathisers of the LTTE are forced out of buses and summarily executed. Passengers speak of a kind of Mafia gang actively operating on this section of the road, right under the eyes of the IPKF, and apparently with their blessings, protection and support. This gang of ruffians continue to be a law unto themselves and they have been enjoying this 'freedom' for over five months now; and they are known as 'Three Stars' — drop-outs from some militant movements.

Sometime in January an elderly lady from the West, a representative of the Red Cross was trying to travel by car from Trincomalee to Jaffna, and had to turn back to Anuradhapura and onwards to Colombo because the driver of the car, harassed by the 'Three Star' men refused to go further. When the car stopped at a petrol bunk in Vavuniya, a few of these ruffians walked up and the first words they addressed to the driver were: 'Why have you brought this old hag here; you could have brought a young woman.' Fortunately the lady did not understand the language and the driver and a local who was in the car avoided translating what the men had said.

In the third week of March, a businessman from Vavuniya complained that he was almost relieved of a large sum of money he had just then withdrawn from the bank. Having failed in the first attempt, the group tried to summon the businessman to the group's camp. Having failed in that also, the group made arrangements to close the businessman's establishment. All these happened under the very nose of the IPKF. The businessman has sent written complaints to the Indian and Sri Lankan authorities.

Some Tamil passengers who in their desperation went into a Sri Lankan army camp which was also in the same area and complained of the atrocities of the 'Three Star' gang were told by a Sinhalese officer who was very sympathetic: 'What do you expect us to do — fight the IPKF?'

S.S. Maniam

Vavuniya
Sri Lanka

JVP'S CHARACTER

You have done a great service by publishing in Tamil Times (March '88) the article and documents concerning the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) which expose it as a crudely racist organisation masquerading as a 'marxist party', but really serving the cause of right wing reactionaries.

The fact that JVP has targeted not only government party politicians, but also human rights activists and left political parties which have called for the lifting of the ban on the JVP truly reflect its terrorist character.

I was in Sri Lanka when the JVP faced severe repression after its abortive insurrection of April 1971. Its leaders were put on trial under special laws. Very few Sinhalese lawyers came foreword to defend them. It was some Tamil lawyer who dared the wrath of the governement and came forward to defend the JVP leaders. Now the very same JVP and its leader Rohana Wijeweera have turned anti-Tamil in their campaign and policies and become allies of the very Sri Lanka Freedom Party which subjected them to repression.

Ranjit Daniel

London WC1

The following abridged version of a Tamil poem by 'KARAVAIKKILAN' depicts one of the many true incidents that took place in Mannar, Sri Lanka in 1961. While the district was under occupation by the army, and the people of Mannar experienced untold suffering and indignity, the rest of the Tamil community stood by and did nothing.

Kannamma shook from head to foot
As she longed for Kannan's return,
When the wind lashed her little hut
And it swayed and swore in the rain.

Bewildered she watched from her door
Contingents of troops congregate
Up the winding lane o'er the moor,
Where man and beast shared the same fate.

Truck-loads of men on the rampage
Inflicting wanton sacrilege
Had descended on the village
Sharing in plunder and pillage.

They had been beating and shooting
Feasting like vultures on mis'ry
Kannamma had heard of looting
And raping of girls in pen'ry.

Back on his way from fields afar
Where he worked all day with such grace,
Pleased like one from a chilling war
Kannan longed for his wife's embrace.

Pushing the door that stood ajar
He saw his wife in turmoil deep
As she rushed and held him to her
Bosom and then began to weep:

'The soldiers are now all too near
Like a pack of wolves among sheep,
The hour of reckoning is here,
The child in my womb cannot sleep;

'I have no wish to live a life
Of dismay and disgrace to those
I love, to be a worthless wife
When virtue gets trespassed by force'.

E'en as she spoke the men were at
The hut, bludgeoning and beating
Kannan they bound him hand and foot
And forced him to the jeep, pleading.

She did not wish any more for
Her life, she had no time to spare;
With fortitude she rammed the door
To drown herself and all her care.

Rendered into English by K. PARAMOTHAYAN

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COMMITTING THE ARMY ABROAD

By A.G. Noorani

Are there, indeed, no constitutional checks on the powers of the Government of the day to commit the nation's armed forces abroad? And no responsibility to account to the nation if the commitment proves to have been made ineptly? Neither question brooks any evasion now, seven months after the Government of India sent the army to Sri Lanka on July 30, 1987 as the Indian Peace Keeping Force under the Indo-Sri Lankan agreement signed only the day before.

Unenviable is the mildest word commonly used to describe the predicament in which the men of the IPKF find themselves. The environment is hostile. The task is thankless. The obstacles far greater than what the army was led to believe. No praise can be too high for the jawans and their officers. They have done the nation proud. Their valour and dedication have deservedly won them high praise; recently from President Jayewardene, no less.

In issue is the judgment of the political leadership which sent the army to Sri Lanka on an assignment as a peace-keeping force which has exposed it to unforeseen hazards, is inimical to the country's interests and has exposed it to calumny and ridicule.

The Chief of Army Staff, Gen.K.S. Sundarji, has called for a 'national consensus' on the role of the IPKF. He regretted the doubts which are being voiced. 'Such doubts could affect the morale of the men'.

The General's concern for the morale of our troops deserves respect. But he overlooks two basic distinctions. One is that criticism of the Government's decision to commit cannot and should not be stifled on that score when that criticism is warranted in the national interest. Second, defence of the commitment must be undertaken by the leaders of the Government which made it, not by spokesmen of the Army, however distinguished.

The General himself erred when at Jaipur on December 9, he justified the despatch of the army to Sri Lanka on the ground that it would ensure that there was no 'unfriendly presence' in Sri Lanka. This justification itself is of doubtful validity in the light of the provisions of the agreement. On February 22, Lt. General Depinder Singh, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command, who was the overall Commander of the IPKF, explained to the officers and troops in Bombay why the Force had to be sent. He cited the same reason and others similar to the one cited by Gen. Sundarji. Both erred sadly, albeit pardonably in the unhappy circumstances.

POOR EXPLANATIONS

Explanations by the leaders of the Government of India are anything but cogent or consistent. Whether on the basic decision or on the chain of commands.

The Constitutional position is clear. The Union is vested with exclusive legislative and executive powers in respect of 'defence of India', the armed forces and foreign affairs. No statute is necessary for the exercise of its powers except, as the Supreme Court put it, 'when it is necessary to encroach upon private rights'. The Army Act, 1950, The Air Force Act 1950, and the Navy Act, 1957, were enacted because exercise of disciplinary powers necessarily affects the rights of the personnel of the armed forces. But no statute exists which controls the Government's powers in respect of their deployment abroad. We have nothing comparable to the U.S. War Powers Act, 1973, which imposed a six-day limitation on any Presidential commitment of U.S. troops abroad without Congressional approval, and imposed duties of consultation.

Besides conferring powers, the Constitution also imposes on the Union the duty to protect the nation 'against external aggression' (Art.355). But this does not imply that armed forces cannot be committed for duties abroad when there is no threat of aggression against the country.

These wide powers are to be exercised subject to the checks on powers in a parliamentary system — Parliament, Cabinet and the President. A myth has been fostered that such powers can be wielded by the Prime Minister alone. Attlee's decision to make the bomb and Eden's decision to go to war with Egypt over Suez are cited as precedents. But as Prof. George Jones has demonstrated in a careful study, the impression owes more to legend than to facts. 'In neither case were these decisions taken solely by the Prime Minister. He had to carry with him his chief colleagues and the majority of the cabinet!'

SUPREME COMMAND

However, neither Parliament nor Cabinet is a particularly effective check, given the facts of parliamentary life. The President, thus, remains the only independent check — bar the press and public opinion. Article 53 (2) of the Constitution says that 'the supreme command of the Defence Forces of the Union shall be vested in the President and the exercise thereof shall be regulated by law'. However, this is as an adjunct to his powers and duties as constitutional head of the state.

This makes Article 78 particularly relevant. The President is entitled as Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces to ask questions and demand answers from the Prime Minister. President Rajendra Prasad's diaries show how he would summon not only the Defence Minister, Mr. Baldev Singh, but also the three services chiefs to discuss matters.

The Sri Lanka agreement was signed in Colombo only a few days after President R. Vankataraman assumed office on July 25. Three of its provisions commit India to provide military assistance in terms none too precise. Para 2.14 is in very general terms: 'The Government of India will underwrite and guarantee the resolutions and cooperate in the implementation of these proposals'. Para 2.16 is more specific concerning as it does the contingency 'if any militant group operating in Sri Lanka do not accept this framework of proposals for a settlement'. Note, it does not say 'Tamil Militant' group as Clause (b) of this para mentions. Under Clause (c) of this para, 'In the event that the Government of Sri Lanka requests the Government of India to afford military assistance to implement these proposals the Government of India will co-operate by giving to the Government of Sri Lanka such military assistance as and when necessary'.

These two provisions figure in Para 6 of the Annexure to the Agreement, which says that 'in terms of paragraph 2.14 and paragraph 2.16 (c) of the Agreement, an Indian Peace Keeping Contingent may be invited by the President of Sri Lanka to guarantee and enforce the cessation of hostilities, if so required'.

The tentative wording ('if so required') did not prepare the public for the despatch of the force the very next day, on July 30.

The net result is that India's commitment is not confined to enforcing 'the cessation of hostilities' but extends to 'the implementation of these proposals'; in short till the very last step under them is taken.

PM REAFFIRMS

Signatures on the agreement were not yet dry when confusion arose about the IPKF's term of duty and its command. It has still not been removed, as the record shows. On July 30, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi said that the Indian troops would return 'instantaneously' if Sri Lanka 'wants them to get back'. He reaffirmed this on October 22. As for the command, on July 31 the Indian High Commissioner, Mr. J.N. Dixit, said that the Indian troops had been placed at the 'disposal of President Jayewardene as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of Sri Lanka'. On August 19, the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. K. Natwar Singh, said in the Rajya Sabha that the Indian troops were under the President's command and would be withdrawn when he does not want them anymore. The President's understanding was that the troops are there 'for as long as we need them' (August 8) and were 'under his direction' (October 4).

But the General Officer Comman-

(Contd. on next page)

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FAST UNTO DEATH BY MOTHER SUSEELA GANESHAN

Mrs. Suseela Ganeshan of the Trincomalee Mothers' Front commenced a fast unto death on 10 April at Sivan Kovil premises in Trincomalee in eastern Sri Lanka demanding that (a) India should declare an unconditional ceasefire, (b) The LTTE should lay down their arms, and (c) India and LTTE should negotiate with a view to arriving at the just solution.

A statement issued by the fasting Suseela Ganeshan said:

'The Annaiar Munnani (Mothers' Front) commenced 24 hours relay fast on March 9th. Up to now, two hundred mothers as well as young boys, young girls and children of both sexes have participated. But the Government of India has remained silent. Under the circumstances, we have no alternative but to start a fast unto death. I, a founder member and a member of the Central Committee of the Annaiar Munnani participated in the Tokan Fast conducted by Trincomalee mothers on 29th Feb. at Pattirakali Ampal Temple in Trincomalee in support of the demands put foward by Batticaloa Annaiar Munnani. On that day I came forward voluntarily and gave my name to serve as a member of the Central Committee that was formed amongst the mothers who participated in that fast. I also informed the Secretary of the Annaiar Munnani that I was prepared to commence a fast unto death in this struggle. Now I thank the Annaiar Munnani for having given me an opportunity to fulfil my desire. I have decided to sacrifice my life on my own willingness for the emancipation of the Tamil speaking people. I publicly announce that no one has the right to prevent or stop my fast or to make me to change my decision. But, only in the event of the Government of India agreeing to the demands of the Annaiar Munnani, I will give up my fast with the consent of the Central Committee of the Annaiar Munnani. I wish that the sacrifice of mine for the Tamil speaking people should be felt not only by the Tamil speaking people living in the Northern and Eastern provinces but also all Tamil people living in every nook and corner of the world. Ceasefire by the Government of India and negotiations with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are essential for elimination of sufferings of the Tamil speaking people.

'In order to pursue this, the mothers should come forward to continue the fast unto death in all places wherever the Tamil speaking people live. Particularly, the mothers who were displaced from this country and living in India, especially in Tamil Nadu as refugees should also continue this struggle.

'My last desire is that **THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA WITHOUT WORSENING THE TAMIL PROBLEM, SHOULD DECLARE CEASEFIRE AND NEGOTIATE WITH THE LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM AND MAKE THE FUTURE OF THE TAMIL SPEAKING PEOPLE PROSPEROUS TOO'.**

Continued from page 3

unpleasant truth. But the leadership regrettably does not realise this. We should not fear to discuss our mistakes openly. Some may argue that we only strengthen our enemies by doing so. But this is not true. By frank and open discussion, we can correct our mistakes.'

By any standard, the criticism or rather the denunciation contained in this leaflet issued by the second most powerful man in the organisation against its leader Rohana Wijeweera is bound to deepen the divisions. There are many other factors which are likely to intensify the crisis further. The security forces have achieved major successes in the recent past in apprehending many hard core members of the military wing of the JVP. The killers of the UNP Chairman, Harsha Abeywardene and Police Chief Terrence Perera have already been taken into custody and detained through their 'confessions', many more accomplices would appear to have been taken in. Some suspects in connection with Vijaya's killing and the raids the JVP carried out on military establishments have also been arrested. Over 50 per cent of the JVP gang which attacked the Katunayake Airforce base were either killed in the shoot-out that followed or arrested. Ajit Kumara who was responsible for the grenade attack in the Parliamentary complex has also been apprehended. Reportedly there have also been many desertions and surrenders. The spate of successful arrests would appear to indicate that the JVP might already have been infiltrated by agents of the security forces. Above all, with all its terror tactics, the JVP could not prevent the majority of the people from participating in the Provincial Council poll.

It is in some parts of the southern province the JVP is regarded as strong. The test of strength and the capacity of the JVP to survive will depend on the extent to which it can prevent or disrupt the elections for the provincial council on June 9.

***Contd. from page* 10**

ding the IPKF, Major General Harkirat Singh, was reported to have said on December 3 that 'the Indian Army will not go from here till the Tamils are satisfied and their aspirations are met'. He also said, 'We take orders from the Government of India'. This prompted Sri Lanka's PM, Mr. Premadasa to set the record right in Parliament on December 10. However, in Madras on December 22, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi said, as the journal reported the next day: 'On the doubts raised by certain quarters that IPKF were getting commands from the Sri Lanka Government, Mr. Gandhi said, 'No, they are under our own commanders'.

The confusion persists and inexcusably so. This is not the first time India has sent its armed personnel abroad for peace-keeping. In the past, both the terms of duty and the question of command were precisely defined.

The terms on which the Indian contingent participated in the UN Emergency Force which kept the peace between Israel and Egypt were defined in detail in an exchange of letters between the U.N. Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold and the Government of India on June 21, 1957 and August 14, 1957, accepting the UNEF's Regulations of February 20, 1957. The contingent was subject to the instructions of the UN commander 'through the chain of command', as Regulation 6 put it. However, the Commander transmitted his orders through the commanders of the national contingents who alone were responsible for disciplinary action.

When Prime Minister Nehru agreed to Hammarskjold's request 'to send Indian armed forces to the Congo',he had no difficulty in defining clearly, in the Lok Sabha on March 6, 1961, the terms on which they would serve. An army brigade was placed 'at the disposal of the UN for service in the Congo' but on the understandings he recorded.

In purely bilateral accord such matters are, if anything, more easily and precisely resolved. They were not because, as the language of the document reveals, it was concluded in haste.

The Government of India cannot be allowed to get away with the consequences of its egregious blunders in Sri Lanka, especially in view of the sacrifices of the brave jawans. It must be made to account for its decisions. In the wake of the military operations in Falklands in1982,the British government had to set up a committee of Privy Councillors consisting of members of both parties 'to review the way in which the responsibilities of Government' were discharged. The Committee had full access to all the papers including those of the PM, the Cabinet and the Defence Ministry.

It is imperative that a joint committee of both Houses of Parliament be set up to review the events leading to the conclusion of the Indo-Sri Lanka agreement and the circumstances in which our troops were sent to perform an arduous mission on the basis of assessments which time has exposed to be wildly wrong. We owe that to the jawans.

(Mr. Noorani is a noted Indian jurist).

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COMMENTARY

by R. Ganeshan

PAYMENTS TO LTTE CLARIFIED

Was it malice or mischief, or both ? The recent rather undiplomatic revelation by Mr.J.N.Dixit, the Indian High Commissioner in Colombo, concerning payment made or promised to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE) at the time its leader V.Prabhakaran was in Delhi in late July last year provided an ideal opportunity for the anti-India baiters and anti-Accord elements in Sri Lanka to return to their traditional themes.

There is not a lot of love left between Mr.Dixit and the LTTE. The former made strenuous efforts in August and September last year in several rounds of talks with the LTTE to secure a formula for peaceful solution, but they failed and Mr.Dixit lays the blame for this breakdown on the LTTE . And no doubt he is very bitter that his effort failed. But such personal subjective feelings are not the stuff with which senior diplomats like Mr.Dixit should be made of. If the mischief or malice behind this rather unsolicited revelation was aimed at the LTTE, it backfired and plunged New Delhi in an embarrassing situation. Clearly the High Commissioner had shot his mouth without the consent or knowledge of the Indian Government.

Questions as to the details and propriety of the financial deal between Delhi and the LTTE began to be raised in the parliaments and media of India and Sri Lanka. Was the LTTE prepared to 'sell' the Tamil cause for a sum of Indian money however large it might have been ? Was Sri Lanka made aware of this arrangement? Was it morally proper for the Indian Prime Minister to have struck such a deal? Why was it kept a secret?

Finding that stonewalling on the issue did not silence the critics, the Indian government eventually admitted that there had in fact been an agreement with the LTTE leader V. Prabhakaran to pay a sizeable sum. The first instalment was paid after V.Prabhakaran's return to Jaffna from New Delhi, and a similar sum was to be paid every month until the formation of the provincial administration.

Although Mr.Dixit, by his revelation, left a distinct impression that the payment was an incentive for the LTTE to accept the Accord, the Indian External Affairs Minister, Mr.Natwar Singh, made the position clear in his statement to Parliament:

"As the government have stated before in the House, we have consulted the LTTE as part of the negotiation leading to the signing of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement...When these negotiations were in the final stage, Mr.Prabhakaran, the Leader of the LTTE, had requested that he would like to come to Delhi for a personal meeting with the PM. As part of the final consultations, leaders of all Tamil groups including Mr.Prabhakaran were brought to Delhi with the knowledge of the Sri Lanka government.

"After accepting the Agreement, he (Mr.Prabhakaran) had expressed certain concerns. These pertained to the personal safety of the LTTE leadership, the rehabilitation of the LTTE cadres, financial assistance both for the maintenance of their cadres pending rehabilitation and for construction work, and lastly, a leading role for the LTTE in an interim administration. The government of India took these concerns fully into account. President Jayawardene and Government of Sri Lanka also responded constructively in this regard.

"One of the main problems mentioned by Mr.Prabhakaran concerned the fact that the LTTE had been collecting funds through 'taxes' levied on the people of Jaffna and some other areas of the northern and eastern provinces. According to Mr.Prabhakaran, these collections were being used by them to provide allowances for the upkeep of their cadres. It was made clear to Mr.Prabhakaran that once the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement came into effect, such forced collections from the population must cease.

"The Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement provides that the government of Sri Lanka will make special efforts to rehabilitate the militant youth with a view to bringing them back to the mainstream of national life. India is expected to cooperate in this process. In order to help the LTTE make the difficult transition from militancy to peaceful democratic politics, it was agreed to extend some interim financial relief. It will cover the period till the rehabilitation of its cadres.

"Since Mr.Prabhakaran had declared his support to the Agreement, and had agreed to surrender arms, it was a reasonable expectation that the interim administration would come into existence within a few weeks and the LTTE cadres would be speedily re-employed by the Sri Lanka government who had promised to fully cooperate in the process. On this understanding, an instalment of financial assistance was made available to the LTTE with the knowledge of the Sri Lanka government.

"I would like to categorically refute the misleading newspaper reports that this payment was to persuade Mr.Prabhakaran to accept the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement. This kind of aspersion is beneath contempt. . .References have also been made in newspaper reports about a sum of Rs.100 crores. I would like to clarify that Mr.Prabhakaran had asked for a sum of Rs.100 crores for reconstruction work in Tamil areas. No commitment was given to him about a payement of this sum. It was clarified to him that such payments can only be made on a government-to-government basis".

Natwar Singh's statement makes clear the surrounding circumstances in which the LTTE raised the question of payments and the Indian government's response. The innuendo contained in the so-called revelation by Mr.Dixit that the payments were for buying LTTE's acceptance of the Accord would, in the words of the India External Affairs Minister, be "beneath contempt".

As for the LTTE, it was another instance of Mr.Dixit's attempt to tarnish its image. An LTTE spokesman has been quoted as saying:"Dixit's statement is a malicious distortion of the truth calculated to discredit our image. He has tried to give the impression that the money was paid to purchase our loyalty". It would seem that the LTTE's monthly 'tax' collections in Jaffna alone approximated to 1.5 crore Sri Lanka rupees, and it was anxious to find alternative sources of revenue to maintain its cadres. The LTTE spokesman, almost confirming Natwar Singh's statement, is quoted as having said: "We also earned money from small-scale industries we had set up. Our monthly revenue used to be Rs.2 crore. Of that, we spent around Rs.60 lakh a month to administer Jaffna, the rest was for upkeep of our cadres and running the organisation. When we agreed to cooperate with the Indian Government, we had to ensure the upkeep of our cadres. It was the only reason we accepted the money."

The allegation that the financial arrangement with the LTTE was made without the knowledge of the Sri Lankan government has also proved false. While Natwar Singh's statement is explicit about the Indian Government having kept Colombo informed, a statement issued from Sri Lanka's Presidential Secretariat on 26 April confirmed that the government was aware of the assistance given and saw nothing wrong in the decision taken by the government of India to give some interim assistance to the LTTE cadres pending their absorption to normal life.

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INTERNATIONALISATION OF TAMIL LANGUAGE

Sachi.Sri Kantha
(University of Tokyo, Japan)

I enjoyed reading the meaningful analyses written by S. Sivanayagam and R. Narendran on the present status and future prospects of Sri Lankan Tamilians (TAMIL TIMES, Feb.1988). Five years ago, I contributed a survey entitled, 'Internationalisation of the Eelam Struggle' (TAMIL TIMES, Apr.1983) and much had happened to the Tamil cause during this tumultuous period. To a certain extent, internationalisation of the freedom struggle had been achieved with a mixture of positive and negative results. However, in this article, I wish to record some aspects related to the internationalisation of Tamil language in broader perspectives.

First, I'll provide a contemporary estimate of Tamilians living in this globe. According to the BRITANNICA BOOK OF THE YEAR 1987, the number of Tamil speakers in the world amounts to approximately 60 million,. In only five countries, Tamil is officially listed in the census of languages. They are, India (53.38 million), Sri Lanka (5.428 million), Malaysia (0.634 million), Singapore (0.166 million) and Mauritius (0.037 million). This tally adds up to 59.645 million. In addition, there are ethnic Tamilians living in another dozen or so countries. These ethnic Tamilians can be of the following two categories.

The first category, is the descendants of those who were settled by the British and French colonialists in tropical islands, Burma and South Africa to work in plantation labour and rail-road building ventures. The fourth or fifth generation descendants of the original Tamil settlers are living in South Africa (approx. 70,000), Jamaica, Trinidad and other islands in the Caribbean (approx. 50,000), Burma (approx 50,000), Fiji (approx. 35,000) and Seychelles (approx 3,000). These ethnic Tamilians are presently on the verge of losing their ethnic identity. About the situation in South Africa, a century ago, Mahatma Gandhi had this to say in his autobiography: 'I had undertaken to teach Tamil and Urdu. The little Tamil I knew was acquired during voyages and in jail. I had not got beyond Pope's excellent Tamil hand book . . .The Tamil boys were all born in South Africa and therefore knew very little Tamil, and did not know the script at all. So, I had to teach them the script and the rudiments of grammar'. We should admire the fact that, among the many voluntary jobs he did, Gandhi also had worked as a teacher of Tamil language. Those who learnt Tamil under Gandhi formed a solid regiment in his non-violent army and moulded the Gandhi style of satyagraha warfare. Among those who settled in the Caribbean Islands in the last century, two of Tamil descent made their names in international cricket. Who have not been thrilled by the dashing batting style and dynamic stroke play of Rohan Kanhai (corrupted version of Kanniah) in 1960s and Alvin Kallicharan (corrupted version of Kaleeswaran) in 1970s?

The second category of ethnic Tamilians presently living in the traditionally non-Tamil homelands are the recent immigrants (since mid 1950s) and Sri Lankan refugees (since early 1980s). According to Guy de Fontgalland's 1986 survey book, 'SRI LANKANS IN EXILE', Sri Lankan Tamilians have been accounted as living in the United Kingdom (35,000), Fed.Rep.Germany (26,000), France (22,000), Australia (20,000), USA (10,000), Canada (10,000), Switzerland (5,000), Netherlands (2,500), Denmark (2,000), Sweden (600), Norway (500), and Belgium (100). An equivalent number of Tamilian professionals from India also live in these countries. This category is predominantly composed of first generation immigrants; but their children face the plight of living in a non-traditional cultural milieu. One event which needs mention here was that the 1985 National High School students' spelling bee contest in the USA was won by Balu Natarajan (son of Indian Tamilians) living in Chicago. When interviewed by the American newspapers after his victory, Balu told that at his home, he usually speaks a mixture of Tamil and English ('Taminglish'). This trend will dominate among the younger generaton of Tamilians living in traditionally non-Tamil speaking countries.

Now let me have critical look at the status of Tamil language at an international level. Considering the fact that there are 3000 to 4000 languages spoken in the world today, Tamil is recognized by linguists as a major language. Only 12 languages are spoken by more than 100 million. These are Mandarin Chinese (771 million), English (415 million), Hindi-Hindustani (287 million), Spanish (285 million), Russian (282 million), Arabic (171 million), Bengali (166 million), Portuguese (161 million), Malay-Indonesian (125 million), Japanese (121 million), German (118 million), and French (112 million). Many of these languages reached this status because of imperialistic past. For reasons easy to understand, these languages dominate the contemporary international scene in diplomacy, trade, science, electronics and mass media communication. Tamil doesn't enter into this elite category since the Tamilian imperialism faded after the Chola conquest of South East Asia in the twelfth century. However, the next category of another 12 major languages are spoken by 50 to 100 million. And Tamil (with 60 million speakers) is placed in this category. Others are, Urdu (80 million), Punjabi (70 million), Korean (64 million), Italian (63 million), Telugu (61 million), Marathi (60 million), Cantonese Chinese (58 million), Wu Chinese (56 million), Javanese (50 million), Turkish (50 million), and Vietnamese (50 million). One should note that the majority of other European languages such as Polish, Greek, Scandinavian languages, and Slovakian languages doesn't command a speaking population of 50 million.

The Sixth International Tamil Research Conference was finally held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, last November. But, after observing the 'politics', delegate selection, organization and the outcome of each of these International Conferences in Tamil held previously in Kuala Lumpur (1966), Madras (1968), Paris (1970), Jaffna (1974), Madurai (1981) and again in Kuala Lumpur (1987), one may wonder how far the aims and objectives in internationalizing the Tamil language have been achieved since 1966. When one glances through the abstracts of research papers presented at the recently held Tamil Conference, it seems even now the majority of the Tamilians are living in the glories of bygone past. C.N. Annadurai aptly focused this ignorance in one of his biting dialogues long time ago:

> Teacher: 'What is the vehicle of Yaman?' (Emanudaiya vahanam ethu?)
> peasant: 'bull, sir' (Erumaiik kadah, samy)
> Teacher: 'Who discovered the aeroplane?' (Aeroplanaik kandu pidithavan yaar?)
> peasant: 'I don't know sir' (Theriyathu, samy)

Not only the peasants, even the Tamil academics seems to be ignorant of the developments of this century. The major themes reported and analyzed by the Tamil scholars in these International Tamil Conferences relate to the archaic topics such as 'Raman as seen by Valmiki and Kamban'. But hardly anyone bothers to learn and inform that in this century, the most popular Tamil name in the science laboratories of America, Europe, Asia, Australia and Africa is another Raman, who won the Nobel prize in physics in 1930. The challenges faced by this C.V. Raman in Calcutta (not the Seetha's Raman in Mithilai Nagar) and the victory of this Raman over the Soviet scientists Landsberg and Mandelstam in reporting the Raman Effect in 1928 (not the Kaviya Raman's victory over Ravanan) should be the discussion themes for the rejuvenation of Tamil culture in this computer age.

Only during the last three centuries, English, French and German became the languages of science. Russian and Japanese made their entry into the elite group of languages of science only since mid 19th century. Long before the

Contd. on page 15

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rise of these languages, Tamil held a center stage with Sanskrit, Chinese, Arabic, Persian and Greek as the medium of scholars in physical, philosophical and medical sciences. This fact has been acknowledged by eminent science historians like George Sarton and Joseph Needham. If this century is dubbed as the century of science and electronics, then Tamilians have proved themselves as worthy of emulation as role models for younger generation. Two Tamilians (C.V. Raman and his nephew S. Chandrasekhar) have won the Nobel prize in physics during the last 60 years. Another Tamilian, Srinivasan Ramanujan is now acknowledged as the foremost mathematical genius of this century.

Last year, the birth centennial of Ramanujan (1887-1920) was celebrated by the students of mathematics all over the world. At the University of Illinois, USA, an International Conference was held to study the contributions of Ramanujan to mathematics. Articles commemorating the mathematical genius of Ramanujan have appeared in the distinguished journals such as SCIENCE, NEW SCIENTIST and SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN. This year is the birth centennial of C.V. Raman (1888-1970). To celebrate this anniversary, the XIth International Conference on Raman Spectroscopy is scheduled to be held in London in September of this year. Previous International Conferences on Raman Spectroscopy had been held in Ottawa (1969), Oxford (1970), Reims (1972), Maine (1974), Freiburg (1976), Bangalore (1978), Ottawa (1980), Bordeaux (1982), Tokyo (1984) and Oregon (1986). While the rest of the world is celebrating the achievements of 'two brilliant brains' ever produced among Tamilians, the majority of us won't even feel the significance of these celebrations. If the Jews feel proud of the genius of Einstein and the Polish nationals cherish the achievements of Marie Curie, then the Tamilians can also be proud of producing a Ramanujan and Raman amongst ourselves. How many of the Tamilians know much about the himalayan achievements of Raman and Ramanujan in international science? While perusing the Abstracts of the International Tamil Conference recently held in Malaysia, I couldn't find a single research paper on these two intellectuals. Why this ignorance? How many of the Tamil publishing entrepreneurs can invest money in bringing out the Tamil translations of all the original scientific publications of Raman, Ramanujan and Chandrasekhar written in English? To gain international recognition, these intellectuals had to contribute their research articles in English. But now it is the duty of those who are interested in promoting Tamil culture, to invest time and money to translate their works into the Tamil language. The students in China can read the research papers of Nobelists Chen Ning Yang and Tsung Dao Lee in their own Chinese language. Similarly, the students in Japan have many simplified study books in Japanese describing the research studies of Japan's Nobelists Yukawa, Tomonaga, Esaki, Fukui and Tonegawa. But think about the poor plight of Tamilian students of science who are not provided with the opportunity of learning about the achievements of 'their' great scientists.

Now, I wish to focus attention on the status of Tamil literature. Whether one agrees or not, in this century, the popularity of a language depends much on the annual awards of Nobel prize in literature. A Nobel literature prize to an obscure scholar (or an 'obscure' language in an 'international' sense) translates into many benefits. For instance, (a) those directing the language studies in the universities of Western hemisphere take a special interest in recruiting scholars of those particular languages, recognized by Nobel awards. (b) Publishing moguls, rush to print translations of the laureate's previous books, poems, autobiography etc. (c) General recognition and awareness (among the scholars and those who control the mass-media) to the language shows an increase. Of course, one may point out that the Nobel literature prize is not a proper yardstick to measure the great cultural heritage of a language. True that the Nobel literature prize is biassed towards the Scandinavian, European and North American literatis. And among the Asian languages, only Bengali (Tagore in 1913) and Japanese (Kawabata in 1968) have been honoured by the Nobel awards. Not that there weren't adequate number of Tamil scholars who were worthy of consideration. By any measure, Indian Tamil writers, scholars and poets such as Subramanya Bharathi, C.N. Annadurai, Dr. M. Varadarajan, Kavignar Kannadasan and Akilan could have been the winners of the Nobel literature prize. Among the Sri Lankan Tamil scholars and writers, it is my opinion that Swami Vipulananda and S. Ponnuduraai (Es.Po) belonged to the 'Nobel class'.

Then why no Tamilians have been awarded this prestigious prize yet? This is dependent on the restrictions related to the nomination and selection processes of Nobel prizes. The majority of the members of Nobel selection committee are Swedish nationals. Though they may be fluent in major international languages, as well as in other Scandinavian languages, they would prefer to read the other literature translations in Swedish. Of the 84 prizes awarded so far, Scandinavian authors have won 15. As expected, the languages of imperialism (English, French, German and Spanish) have dominated the majority of the Nobel literature prizes. However, awards have also been given to authors who have contributed in languages spoken by less than 15 million such as Czech (12 million), Greek (11 million), Hebrew (3 million) and Yiddish (less than one million). Here comes the stumbling block for the selection of Tamilian scholars and writers. How many of the Tamil writings of reputed authors have been translated into Swedish or other Scandinavian languages, so that those who form the selection panel for Nobel literature prizes have had a chance to aquaint with the Tamil literature? I doubt tha the number could be less than fifty. Since Tamil language had lost its prestige as a language of diplomacy and trade long time ago, efforts should be urgently made to translate the Tamil literature into other international languages.

Another disadvantage that the Tamil language faces is that, when it comes to international recognition (either in scholarly book, magazine and newspaper reviews, or in the annual reviews of International reference sources like ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA and ENCYCLOPEDIA AMERICANA) it is categorized as **one** of the twenty or so major languages of the Indian subcontinent. Unlike other Asian languages like Chinese, Japanese, Bengali or Korean, at the moment, Tamil doesn't represent an entire country. The pride of place among the Indian languages goes to Hindi, being the langauge spoken by nearly 35-40 percent of the Indian population. Tamil is spoken by only 7 percent of the total Indian population. Bengali is spoken both in India and by the entire population in Bangladesh. Due to intellectuals and creative artists like Tagore, Uday Shankar, Ravi Shankar and Satyajit Ray and their skills in presenting their works to a foreign audience, Bengali became recognized among international circles. On the contrary, Tamil has failed in this respect so far, though there is no dearth of talent among the Tamilians. The only contemporary Tamil writer of international reputation, Rasipuram Krishnaswamy Narayan, has used English as his medium for story-telling. However he has set all his major fiction in an invented town Malgudi. Narayan's brother R.K. Luxman is the foremost Indian political cartoonist. We should also keep in mind that in India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia, the Tamil language is an 'orphan' in terms of 'official patronage'. Hindi, Sinhalese and Malay languages enjoy this official patronage in abundance.

Can Tamil be considered as an international language then? Though it is difficult to make a proper classification, I had read, that for a language to be considered as an international language, it should satisfy either of the two criterions. First, it should have more than 100 million native speakers. Secondly, it should have at least 50 million native speakers and more than 10 percent of three or four countries should use it for their means of communication. Tamil satisfies the second criterion, but Telugu or Italian doesn't Hence, Tamil could be considered as (sort of) an international language.

But, has Tamil gained international respect? After leaving Sri Lanka, I have checked in the book stores of major cities in the USA and Japan, whether Tamil is included in any of the language textbooks produced by the publishers (such as Berlitz, Audio

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BRITISH NATIONALITY AND SRI LANKAN DUAL CITIZENSHIP

BY WIMAL SOCKANATHAN

British Citizenship is acquired:

1. By birth
2. By Registration
3. By Naturalisation

A child born in Britain to parents who are British Citizens or are settled in Britain acquires British Citizenship automatically. A child adopted by a British citizen is considered to be a British citizen.

British citizenship is also obtained by registration. When the British Nationality Act 1981 came into force on 1st January 1983 it gave five years time limit to all those entitled for citizenship by Registration. This entitlement ceased on 31st December 1987 when we saw a large number of applicants rushing to the Home office requesting citizenship being unaware that this deadline did not apply for naturalisation.

Those whose entitlement ceased on 31st December 1987 were :

(1) Commonwealth and Irish citizens settled in Britain before 1973.

(2) Women married to citizens of UK and colonies before 1983.

Their entitlement expired last year and this was mistakenly interpreted by some people including the ethnic media that after 31st December 1987 no immigrants were to be granted British Citizenship or British Passports! The deadline was clearly intended only for the two limited categories. The Immigration Nationality Department at Lunar House Croydon worked until late into the night on 31st December last year to accept applications.

There is however a third method of acquiring British citizenship — by Naturalisation. This is not an entitlement or right but depends on executive consent. It is at the discretion of Home Secretary. Naturalisation is a method of obtaining British citizenship. The status of British citizenship whether obtained at birth, by Registration or by naturalisation does not differ from one another in any way. The British Nationality Act 1981 deals with the law governing naturalisation.

Age (18 and over), good character, knowledge of English (Welsh or Scottish Gaelic) and five years residence in UK are the essential requirements for a person to apply for British citizenship by Naturalisation. It is important to note that at the time of application the applicant should also be free from any restriction under the Immigration Laws and should have been so for a period of at least 12 months prior to the date of application, for citizenship.

Some of the requirements for British citizenship by Naturalisation are waived if the applicant is married to a British citizen. Such person requires three years residence only and does not require knowledge of English. Also the fee payable is £60 instead of £170 in other cases. Applications should be supported by two referees known to the applicant for three years. They should be persons of good character without any convictions and should be British Citizens (and not relatives or the applicants solicitors).

The Nationality department takes more than 12/24 months to complete and the applicants are advised that if the passports are required by them for urgent travel such documents should not be enclosed with the original application and should be sent only when called for.

When the application for citizenship by Naturalisation is approved by the Home Secretary at his discretion the applicant is asked to take an Oath of Allegiance. He then becomes a British citizen from the date of the certificate signed by the Home Secretary. The certificate of naturalisation is the evidence of the applicant's British citizenship and the applicant is entitled to apply for a British passport.

LOSS OF CITIZENSHIP

The certificate of naturalisation is withdrawn by the Home Secretary if it is found to have been obtained by fraud, false representation or concealment of important facts.

Any British citizen by birth, registration or naturalisation, may renouce his citizenship by signing a declaration to this effect. When such declaration is registered with the Nationality Department with the appropriate fee he ceases to be a British citizen.

Acquiring the citizenship of a foreign country **does not** — under the Law presently in force in UK cause the automatic loss of British citizenship. A British citizen desiring to divest himself of his citizenship may only do so by signing a declaration of renunciation as mentioned earlier, and registering such document.

However, it is interesting to note that many countries like India, and Sri Lanka and mainly from the third World, take away their citizenship and deprive a person of his citizenship as soon as he obtains British citizenship. A person who becomes a British Citizen is considered to have lost his nationality and therfore no longer entitled to hold his Indian or Sri Lankan passport. As a result of this view by those countries the Indian and Sri Lankan High Commissions have directly requested the British Home Office that as soon as an applicant from their country is granted British citizenship his passport proving his previous citizenship of their country should be returned direct to them to be cancelled.

There are also some countries which instead of taking away their citizen's nationality — react in a different manner by not recognizing the British citizenship. In this situation the British Home Office advises that those who have become British citizens should first obtain an independent confirmation about their own nationality from their former country's High Commission before visiting such country of his old nationality when he needs it .

SRI LANKAN DUAL CITIZENSHIP

Sri Lanka has made a welcome change in November last year which will help thousands of Sri Lankan nationals settled in Britain and other overseas countries, which allow dual citizenship like Britain. The original section 19 of the Sri Lankan Citizenship Act which deprives a Sri Lankan National of his Sri Lankan Citizenship when he acquires the citizenship of any other country — has now been amended.

A bill to this effect was presented to the Sri Lankan Parliament by the Minister of National Security in 1987 and has been passed. The Act known as Dual Citizenship (Amendment) Act No.45 of 1987 came into force from the 25th November 1987.

Under the new Act of 1987 any Sri Lankan who had lost his Sri Lankan citizenship by acquiring the citizenship of another country may apply to the Minister for a Declaration of Dual Nationality. The Minister will examine all the circumstances of the case and if he considers that such person becoming a Sri Lankan Citizen of dual nationality is indeed beneficial to Sri Lanka he shall then make such declaration.

It is interesting to note that the executive Consent is retained in this case and that dual nationality is not dished out to each and every applicant as a matter of right. It is at the

Contd. on next page

Continued from page 15

Forum, Linguaphone, Teach Yourself Book Series) for use of tourists and elementray level students. To my dismay, I haven't come across a single publication related to teaching Tamil. But the same publishers have books on teaching languages such as Dutch (11.7 million speakers), Amharic (10.2 million), Swedish (7.5 million), Finnish (4.5 million), Norwegian (4 million) and Hebrew (3 million). We ought to do something about this lapse at the earliest.

Finally, let us remember the advice of poet Subramanya Bharathi. To cite one of his memorable verses in translation:

'Gloating over the past glories within ourselves is worthless
If your are a genius, foreigners should feel speechless'

'(Maraivaha namakkulei pazham kathaikal pesuvathil payanillai
Thiramana pulamaiyenil velinaataan athai vanakkam seithal vendum)'

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Contd. from page 4

All-India Congress Committee(I) session at Kamaraj Nagar in Tamil Nadu clearly was to create a climate in which the Congress(I) could return to power in the state after more than two decades in the wilderness. Nothing of the sort is going to happen if public response to the session is an indication. There was little popular enthusiasm. Mr.Rajiv Gandhi's 70-minute train journey from the Trisulam railway station to Kamaraj Nagar did not bring out the hoped for cheering multitudes at the station or along the way. The main pandal at the AICC(I) session was half empty last Saturday despite desperate attempts to fill it up. If Mr.G.K.Moopanar did something which is not normally done at AICC(I) sessions — asking the public to come into the pandal and listen to the Prime Minister — the party sent numerous trucks to the villages to bring crowds. To no avail. . .'

But on the final day of the sessions — Sunday — the situation improved, and the pandal managed to fill up. It was later explained that the problems of feeding the vast crowds overnight stood on the way of attracting people the previous day!

Apart from putting up a whole railway station named Kamaraj Nagar, opening temporary banks, telephone exchanges, security posts, air conditioned rooms for the Prime Minister, his secretary, his security and personal staff, whole building, structures, shops were demolished as part of the security precautions. Among other security precautions was the rouding up of hundreds of Sri Lankan Tamil youths in the city in their homes and rooms in the dead of night, practically all of whom were pulled out of their sleep, and some of whom happened to be students in colleges and technical institutes. Depending on the temperament of the police officer concerned some students were released, while others were shut up in the Central Jail. The first batch was released only two days after the Prime Minister left the city. If the Prime Minister saw what others could see, it is more than likely that Governor's rule will be prolonged, and elections pushed back beyond July.

* * *

PREMADASA'S PEREGRINATIONS

Madras apparently is no longer a dreaded place for Sri Lanka government politicians. In mid-February this year, Minister for Rural Development Mrs.Wimala Kannangara flew into Madras and motored to the holy shrine of Venkateshwara at Tirupathi in Andhra Pradesh. She told a PTI reporter that she was disturbed by the assassination of SMP leader Vijaya Kumaranatunga, and so she came to Tirupathi. She had taken plane the day after the assassination. A March visitor was Speaker E.L.Senanayake who was one day spotted by your correspondent window shopping at Mount Road along with his wife and a son, while local security men in mufti prowled around pretending window shopping themselves! Minister Rajadurai is reported to have a room booked at a popular hotel in Madras for long spells apparently travelling incognito. A recent visitor was Mrs.Ranganayaki Pathmanathan who we were told came on a private visit in connection with a marriage in the family, and stayed in a private home at Besant Nagar.

The one exception has been Prime Minister Premadasa who also went to Tirupathi in the course of his one-month peregrinations in India and Nepal, but appears to have avoided Madras like the plague, and had gone to Kovalam beach in Kerala instead. But at Trivandrum he had some unexpected problems. Says a UNI report: Trivandrum, April 25 :'The arrangements made for Sri Lanka Prime Minister R.Premadasa's trip from Trivandrum airport to the Kovalam beach resort, near here, dissolved in confusion when the VIP limousine failed to start. The visiting dignitary who was accompanied by his wife, was formally conducted to an air-conditioned Buick and the motorcade was all set to go. But the car developed starting trouble and its air-conditioned system also went out of order. The city police commissioner had the embarrassing task of requesting Mr.Premadasa and wife to leave the car and get into a Standard-2000. According to airport sources the troubles did not end there as the left front door of the spare car would not open to enable Sri Lankan security men to get in. The door opened finally when forced and security staff got into the car. The motorcade started about 15 minutes behind schedule.

There was tight security at the airport, and journalists and press photographers except those from Doordashan, All India Radio and the Public Relations Department were not allowed inside. The visiting dignitary was received at the airport by the Secretary, General Administration Department, and the city Police Commissioner. No Minister was Present'.

* * *

TAMIL STUDENTS IN MID-STREAM

Thousands of Sri Lankan Tamil refugees belonging to middle class families living on their own, outside the camps, in Tamil Nadu are agitated by a recent circular of the Goverment of India. According to the circular, a vast number of students will be shut out from educational opportunities in India. There will be no new admissions to universities, colleges and technical institutes. Those who are already in colleges and universities and technical institutes will be permitted to finish their courses. Students who have now completed classes XII (the pre-university qualifying exam) should be sent back to Sri Lanka, as well as all those who are studying in classes below Standard XI. Even those students who are permitted to remain in India are subject to one condition: The circular states: 'However the extension of the student visas would be subject to the condition that the parents of such children would not insist on staying back in India on the pretext of completion of the respective courses of their wards'.

In the absence of any arrangement with the Goverment of Sri Lanka for recognition of the certificates obtained in India, this step would be tantamount to leaving several thousands of Tamil students in mid-stream. It must be remembered that these students are no burden on the Government of India and along with their parents are recipients of foreign exchange.The question being asked by many people is: Is the Indian Government's anger against the LTTE now being directed against **all** Sri Lankan Tamils ?

Continued from page 16

discretion of the Minister and obviously the applicant's past record and whether he has been in the good books of the Government of the day will be matters which will be taken into consideration. Applications for Declaration of Dual Nationality may be made by the Sri Lankan citizen after he acquires a foreign nationality or while he is in the process of obtaining one. Such persons upon receiving the Declaration certified by the Minister will be considered to have resumed the Sri Lankan citizenship notwithstanding the fact that he is also now a citizen of another country.

It is also important to point out that the Sri Lankan Minister has the right to revoke and to take away the Declaration and deprive a persons dual nationality if the Minister is satisfied that the person has conducted himself in a manner that his continuance as a citizen of Sri Lanka will not be of any benefit to Sri Lanka.

Although the dual citizenship law was passed in November 1987 the necessary procedure to make application to the Minister and necessary forms for this purpose have not yet been formulated by Sri Lanka government and are expected very shortly.

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Special issues claiming to be Saturday Review published from Colombo are unauthorised.

We will resume publication of Saturday Review from Jaffna as early as possible.

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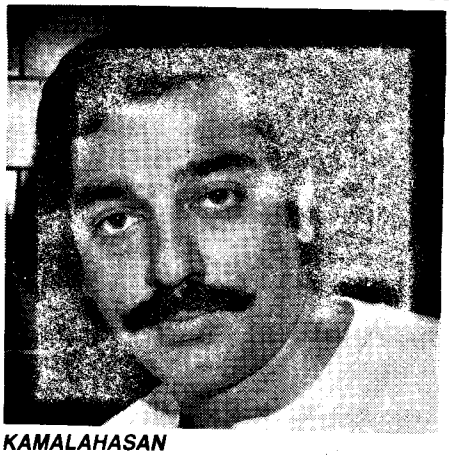

KAMALAHASAN

ARCHANA

Kamalahasan has been adjudged the best actor and **Archana** received the best actress award when the 35th National Film Festival of India awards for 1988 were announced. Kamalahasan bagged the award for the moving portrayal of a multifaceted character with subtle moral nuances in the Tamil film "Nayakan". Archana got her award for her totally naturalistic depiction of a middle class working urban girl facing the daily tensions of life, in the Tamil film "Veedu". It is noteworthy that the all India awards for the best actor and the best actress in 1988 were for performances in Tamil films.

Adoor Gopalakrishnan won the award for the best screen play. K.J.Jesudass shared with Ashla Bhonsle the award for playback singing. The Tamil films 'Ore Oru Gramathiley' and 'Vedham Puthithu' shared the award for the best on social issues.

AMRITRAJ ADDRESSES UNITED NATIONS

Vijay Amritraj, India's top sports personality addressed the United Nations in New York on May 6 against Apartheid. The UN meeting which was also addressed by other famous personalities like Michael Jackson and Bishop Desmond Tutu was convened to mark the 25th anniversary of the Committee Against Apartheid. He is one of the three Indians named for the Human Tree Award for humanitarian service. Several top ranking leaders drawn from different walks of life around the world have also been nominated for this inaugural set of awards to be presented at Los Angeles on May 27.

Vijay interviewed in Madras expressed his happiness at the honour to be conferred on him in London for his contribution to East-West understanding, at a joint function to be organised by the London Borough of Merton and the South London Tamil Welfare group on June 11.

AIADMK OFFICE: COURT STAYS ORDER

The supreme court by its interim orders on April 21 has suspended the operation of the orders dated March 23, 1988 passed by the Madras High Court quashing the proceedings under section 145 of the Cr PC before an Additional District Magistrate , Madras concerning the issue of possession of AIADMK party headquarters office at Avvai Shanmugan Salai, Madras.

The High Court had held that it was open to Mrs. Janaki Ramachandran and other petitioners before the High Court (belonging to the Janaki group of the AIADMK) to break open an additional lock if any, enter the premises and continue to be in possession of the premises.

The Bench comprising Mr. Justice G.L. Oza, Mr. Justice B. Ray and Mr. Justice Jagannatha Shetty made these orders while granting Special Leave to Dr.H.V. Hande (petitioner before the Supreme Court) belonging to Jayalalitha group of the AIADMK to appeal against the orders of the High Court.

CINEMA

'En Bommukutti Ammavukku'

"I wish Father you would stop coming to see Tinu" pleads the woman who once hated the very idea of adoption. Her earlier rigid attitude is the result of a drowning incident in which she loses her little daughter. That shock and knowledge that she could no longer bear another baby had shrunk her world to two humans — herself and her devoted, understanding engineer husband.

When Tinu, the girl from the orphanage, changes her entire mental make-up following her husband's stout-hearted insistence in getting her, her life suddenly blossoms. How the new found happiness progresses is very beautifully narrated by director Fazil ("Poovae Poochuda Vaa" and "Poovizhi Vasalilae") in Pavalar Creations' (a unit of the Ilayaraja brothers) "En Bommukutti Ammavukku", a re-make of the Malayalam movie in which baby Shalini made her debut.

Fr. Sebastian, in charge of the orphanage, comes to meet engineer Vinod's (Satyarai) wife Lakshmi (Suhasini) who is in anguished frame of mind. He is thoroughly happy that Tinu (baby Geethu) has adapted to the opulence of the Vinods but the father of the girl, Alex (Raghuvaran), wants her back. The priest never informs Lakshmi of this development for he has seen the growing bond between Lakshmi and Tinu. When Lakshmi asks him not to come again and remind Tinu of her orphanage friend, the camera just for a second or two is focussed on the face of Fr. Sebastian stationed outside the gate. His face registers a blend of elation and helplessness — a wonderful performance by M.S.Venkat.

He is not the only person to have a piece of cake in this no-nonsense, vulgarity-free, fight-free, homely entertainment for Fazil has chosen every one with meticulous eye. The screenplay and picturisation (camera: Ananda Kuttan) are so elegant and artistic that each frame has a meaning and each development has far reaching consequences that will tug at one's heart strings.

Alex, the persistent young engineer, also has a valid reason to get back his wife Mercy's (Rekha) baby, born after an affair in which the man lurches her. The cure for Mercy's mental condition hinges on the return of the child. Vinod is adamant in retaining the baby. Alex pleads his case at every possible opportunity with Vinod and Raghuvaran, usually a robust character on the screen, is seen in a different light. These areas are more enjoyable because of the dialogue of Gokul Krishna.

Geethu, frail with beautiful eyes and natural gift to hold one's attention, is a raw talent that has been polished to match the senior artistes.

As the understanding couple Suhasini and Satyaraj make a fine pair. The tiff they have over the adoption issue, the husband making up the next morning for his rude behaviour is so natural. The resolution Lakshmi shows in the end only reflects the feelings of a mother who has lost a child. Rekha in a brief role is quite arresting with Janakaraj adding spice as a lawyer.

Ilayaraja swings into action tuning four very pleasant numbers, the ballad "Bommukutty Ammavukku aararao" taking the top slot.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER RAJIV GANDHI

'DO NOT SEEK THE MIRAGE OF A CHEAP VICTORY'

'We are Tamils from Sri Lanka who have sought refuge in North America, from the injustices heaped upon us by successive government in the land of our birth.

'Some of us left that country as early as 1956, when the "Sinhala Only" legislation was passed, making Sinhala the sole Official Language. We realized then, that no self-respecting member of any minority community had a future there, except as a second class citizen, and that too, on the sufferance of the majority.

'The others are refugees from the five pogoms visited upon Tamils — Tamils only — beginning in 1958, and many other harassments in between, of which you must be aware. It was clear to us, as it is now clear to anyone who is willing to see, that we could have remained there only as hewers of wood and drawers of water, and not as equals in rights or dignity with the majority.

'Some of us left behind parents or other members of our immediate families; others did not ; but we never ceased to look upon the North and East of the Island as our patrimony — the land of our fathers and their fathers. That land will always inspire us as Tamils, and nothing, not even time, will make us surrender it.

'We want to let you know, Mr. Prime Minister, that your policies and your recent action have left us deeply disillusioned. We are disillusioned, not only because you have chosen a course of destroying our hopes of regaining our dignity as a people; but more because we have always associated India with a much greater sense of justice than your recent action can be credited with. You are asking the Tamils to pay an intolerable price — to surrender their dignity, their honour and even their basic rights, to your expediency.

'We are certain, Mr.Prime Minister, that we speak for every generation of Tamils alive today. The values which we have always lived by, and intend to live by, are those we inherited from our forefathers. Our thinking is rooted in the great Indian epics — the Mahabharatha and the Ramayana — and the limitless wealth of religious and literary tradition which can be described only as Indian; Indian, not in any specific religious or linguistic sense, but in the much larger sense of a common cultural and spiritual heritage.

'It is by these standards alone that we measure your actions, and it grieves us deeply that you have failed us as Tamils, you have failed India and all that stood for in the eyes of the world.

'You, Mr.Prime Minister, took upon yourself the role of intermediary between the governmemt of Sri Lanka and the Tamils of Sri Lanka; intermediary between a people stuggling for their basic right and the government which has consistently denied them even their identity. We cannot help seeing a close parallel in the Mahabharatha: Sri Krishna who went to mediate between the Pandavas and the Gauravas.

'Sri Krishna did not make a deal with the Gauravas and bludgeon the Pandavas into accepting a dishonourable peace. That is the path you have chosen, and no amount of sophistry can wash this simple truth away.

'You have sealed off the North and East of Sri Lanka from the inquiring eye of world media. But there is hardly a family among us here which has not received the horrifying details of the ruthless, indiscriminate — and, yes, blood-thirsty — actions of your own armed force, against innocent civilians: our fathers, our mothers, our sisters and brothers. Our villages and our towns are now India's killing fields.

'You cannot re-write history-,Mr.Prime Minister.You cannot impose peace on a people who wanted nothing but peace over half a century, much like the Pandavas, and who chose a separate destiny, only when every avenue of peaceful accommodation was denied them.Two "accords" which were negotiated in good faith by the Tamils were unceremoniously torn up by the Sinhala leaders of the two political parties that have ruled that country since independence. Tamils were burnt alive, and their homes looted and burnt, for the crime of wanting to be equal — nothing more.

'We are also puzzled about your reasons — to be more precise, your motives — for embarking on such an unjust and 'un-Indian' course. We want to be candid, and we cannot help feeling that you have become, wittingly or unwittingly, nothing more than a mercenary commander, serving the designs of a crafty, unscrupulous and morally bankrupt leader of the majority community. Your armed forces are doing what he attempted to do when you protested in the name of justice for Tamils.

'How have things changed ? Is it wrong only when the government of country, whose "integrity" you have now sworn to protect, kills the hapless Tamils,and right when you, as "peace-keeper", kill them ?

'Our expectations of India as the source of our values and beliefs, and of you as heir to Nehru's sense of justice and the Mahatma's commitment to truth, may sound like sloppy sentimentality to your advisers who may quote Chanakya as well as Machiavelli to you. They may have convinced you that there are no permanent friendships, no permanent enmities, only permanent interests. But history has not worked that way, Mr.Prime Minister.

'What happened to Churchill's vision of Britain's permanent interests in India? Or to Napoleon's dreams of France's interests, or Adolph Hitler's version of Germany's destiny? We are quite capable of understanding permanent interests, but we cannot understand how permanent interests can be served by monstrous expediency which is contrary to India's own history, and her destiny. India, we would suggest in our naivette, cannot have permanent interests in hostility to the Tamils, or at their expense.

'There is one more side to this madness, Mr. Prime Minister — madness is what it is, to force a people driven by historical experience to chose a future apart from their tormentors, to embrace the very same people who do not want them except as aliens in their own land. What other conclusion is left to anyone who can see things as they are, from the violent protests by the Sinhalese, against your"Peace Accords"? The Tamils were not a party to this accord; the Sinhalese do not want it; whose peace, then, are you keeping?

'The Tamils are not a violent people, Mr. Prime Minister. We do not condone violence against innocents anywhere. But we have chosen to be free, and you cannot smother that will even if you brought all your armed might to the task; even if you wipe out a whole generation of our youth. Too much water has flowed under the bridge, too many lives sacrificed, too much blood shed in a just cause.

'India has a historic mission, Mr.Prime Minister. History will judge you by your success or failure in carrying that mission forward during your life-time. We want you to succeed. But you cannot succeed if you choose the path of short term expediency, and set out to build India's future on the graves of her real friends, on the ruins of their hopes and their expectation of justice. We can only hope that you will have the courage to understand the resolve of the Tamils to be free and the wisdom to choose India's eternal interests, over the mirage of a cheap victory against a people who trusted you.

Respectfully yours,

N.Vijayanatham

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June 11th 5.30p.m. ***Reception to honour Vijay Amritraj and Variety Entertainment*** *at Merton Civic Hall, The Broadway, London SW19.*

June 25th 7p.m. and June 26th 6.30p.m. ***Carnatic Vocal Concert By Balamurali Krishna*** *at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 4a Castletown Road, London W14.*

ADULT EDUCATION FOR TAMIL IMMIGRANTS

Tamil Development Network of Norway is planning to develop various ADULT EDUCATION initiatives for TAMILS in Norway and wishes to come in contact with Organisations in U.K. already started similar activities

Please contact:

TAMIL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK OF NORWAY, c/o K.SIVARAJAH, POSTBOKS 1129, 9001 TROMSO, NORWAY.

Miss Chithra Satkunananthan, disciple of Mrs Selvaluxmy Ramakrishnan of the Lakshmi Art Centre, gave a delightful performance of Bharatha Natyam at her Arangetram held on 23.4.88 at the Merton Civic hall, Wimbledon, London SW19, before a packed and appreciative audience of friends and wellwishers. Chithra's brillant performance brought credit to her Guru and her proud parents Mr. & Mrs. Satkunananthan of 9 Revell Road, Kingston, Surrey.

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